(d) by when the AAI proposes to complete that work of upgradation of Rajkot airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. Railway Authorities have agreed to transfer the land measuring 21 hectares (approx.) on lease for the development of Rajkot airport with the condition that Airports Authority of India (AAI) should rehabilitate the affected residential units and pay its market value. Railway Board has been requested to transfer the land at a concessional rate so that upgradation work remain viable. Upgradation works will be taken up depending upon the response of Indian Railways.

Overbooking of flights

1872. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of passengers of Air India's Mumbai-London-Chicago flights faced problems after they were offloaded as the plane was overbooked;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Air India's ticket booking system for a particular flight is not proper one, resulting inconvenience to several passengers who booked tickets in advance; and

(d) if so, whether Government proposes to investigate the matter and take corrective steps so that the passengers are not harassed in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) 37 passengers had to be offloaded on flight AI-125 of 8th January, 2008 operating on Mumbai-London-Chicago sector due to overbooking.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. As per international industry practice, airlines overbook their flights to optimize utilization of capacity, as all passengers booked on a flight do not turn up at the airport. However, at times more passengers than expected do turn up and the airline has no option but to resort to offloading. However, for passengers holding tickets, paid in Indian Rupees, for destinations to USA, UK and Europe, compensation is granted in the form of a Miscellaneous Charges Order (MCO), which can be used for future transportation.

Study on aviation emission

1873. SHRI DHARAM PAL SUBHARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering a detailed and comprehensive aviation emission study in Civil Aviation Sector to gauge the level of harmful gases and environmental impact arising out of rapidly expanding aviation sector in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount earmarked for this aviation emission study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has decided to undertake a baseline study for ascertaining emissions from civil aviation in India. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the Ministry of Power has been mandated to carry out the study. The Terms of Reference of the Study are being worked out in consultation with the stakeholders.

Offloading of air passengers

1874. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Airlines including Indian often offload passenger holding confirmed tickets at the last moment without assigning any reason;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this deprives passengers of important engagements and in some cases commitment of offered jobs, resumption of duties etc.; and

(c) the steps Government is taking to avoid such unpleasant situation and to discourage passengers seeking legal remedies in such situations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) As per international industry practice, airlines over book their flights to optimize utilization of capacity, as all passengers booked on a flight do not turn up at the airport. However, at times more passengers than expected do turn up and the airline has no option but to resort to offloading. Air India does have a policy of making alternate arrangements for their travel. They are either accepted on the next available Air India flight or transferred on other airlines, subject to space availability. They are also provided hotel accommodation with meals, transport and telephone facility. Occasionally, letters are given to passengers on request confirming that they have been offloaded, which they can present to their company.

Relaxation of norms for international services

1875. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to relax the norms for international connectivity by domestic airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The issue is being addressed in the proposed National Civil Aviation Policy, which is presently under consideration of a Group of Ministers (GoM);

(c) Do not arise at this stage.